

NSC BRIEFING

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8 SEPTEMBER 1955

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FRENCH NORTH AFRICA

- I. Early last week, the French Cabinet finally accepted Premier Faure's "five-point" program for a solution to the Morocco problem.
 - A. However, press reports indicate doubt in French Government circles that Faure's self-established 12 September "deadline" will be met.
 - B. Additionally, the Moroccan nationalists, with whom Faure had hammered out a tentative agreement on his "five points" before presenting them to his Cabinet, are already protesting the French Government's "indecision, slowness and intransigence."
- II. The Faure package calls for:
 - A. A two-way parlay involving replacement of Moroccan Resident General Grandval (unpopular with the settlers) by Boyer de Latour (unpopular

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both with the settlers and the Moroccans) and the withdrawal of the
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present Sultan, Mohamed ben Arafa.

- B. A three-way parlay: establishment of a "Council of the Throne" formation of a "representative" government under a Moroccan named by that Council, and return of French-deposed former Sultan ben Youssef from exile in Madagascar to some residence in France.

III. The first half of Faure's two-way parlay has already been accomplished. However, the second (removal of ben Arafa) is a present stumbling-block in the plan.

- A. Despite formal Cabinet acceptance of Faure's plan to oust Arafa, at least two cabinet members have reservations. Defense Minister Koenig apparently opposes the Sultan's removal, while Foreign Minister Pinay objects to pressure being applied for Arafa's resignation.
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B. These internal political French tensions, together with growing public opinion as a result of Moroccan bloodshed, might well

threaten Faure's premiership, were the French National Assembly in session. However, the Assembly is not scheduled to reconvene until 4 October and an earlier special session appears improbable.

C. It therefore appears that, even should ben Arafa remain adamant (which seems unlikely), the Faure Government's tenure is safe at least until October.

IV. The remaining three of Faure's "five points" also have their pitfalls. Much depends on the reaction of exiled ben Youssef. Two French representatives have conferred with him in Madagascar, [REDACTED]

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- A. Ben Youssef reportedly has demanded that the French publicly admit his 1953 removal was illegal and also instruct the settlers to cease counter-terrorist attacks.
- B. He further implied that he would issue no statement until he has left Madagascar.
- V. Meanwhile, nationalist terrorism continues throughout Morocco despite strong French military and police repression. A general strike, apparently called by the nationalists for 12 September in Casablanca, may well create additional security problems.

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A. French military authorities are also concerned over evidence of widespread contact and consultation among the Berber tribes of the interior, upon many of whom the French have previously counted for support.

1. French troops in Morocco now total more than 60,000 and are constantly being reinforced by the arrival of small units from metropolitan France.

2. However, outbursts similar to the 20 August Berber massacre at ~~Q~~ued Zem would severely tax France's thin-spread forces in Morocco.

V. Elsewhere in French North Africa, apprehension exists that a new flare-up is imminent in Algeria, despite the extension of a state of emergency to all four Algerian Departments and the arrival of further troop reinforcements from France.

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A. French troops in Algeria now number more than 120,000, supplemented by general and special police units, air force and naval groups and a substantial number of quasi-military units.

1. Some settlers have been armed, despite the objections of the Governor General, and are reported to be taking vigilante action against the natives.
2. following the stiff French reprisals for the 20 August uprisings in the Constantine-Philippeville area, native support for extremist nationalists has become more widespread and stronger and that the situation throughout the Constantine region remains tense.

B. Perhaps the most alarming aspect of the present disorders is the tendency among conservative French officials and settlers to make

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and private utterances in Morocco and Algeria have been strongly anti-American, to the point of claiming US support for the rebels.

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